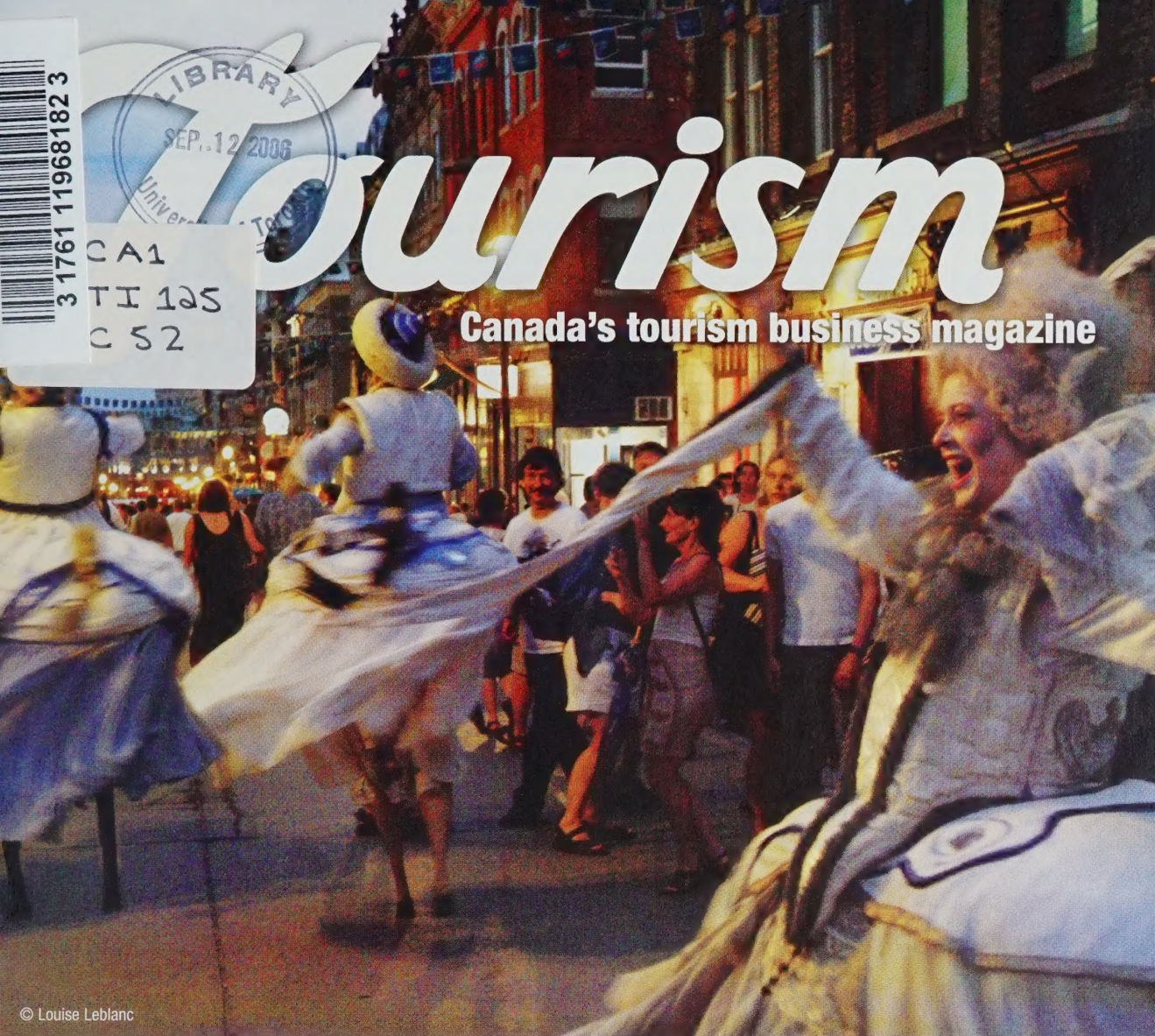


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© Louise Leblanc

# Québec 2008

## Setting the stage

*When journalists find themselves on remote assignments needing someone who knows their way around to arrange meetings and travel details, that person is known as a "fixer." In his own field, as the federal government's Commissioner for the Canadian Government, Laurent Tremblay is, indeed, a fixer.*

"When Québec City saw the 2008 anniversary coming," says Tremblay, "it established in 2000 the *Société du 400<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de Québec* (the non-profit corporation tasked with organizing the 400<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations in that city) to produce the commemorative celebrations. In the meantime, the Federal government developed a national commemoration policy with a five-year plan to commemorate a series of anniversaries reflecting Canada's heritage and values (starting with the founding of Acadia in 2004, the centennial

celebrations of Alberta and Saskatchewan as Canadian provinces in 2005, and Québec 400<sup>th</sup>).

"This event is of national and international significance," he continues, "not only because Québec is an inherent part of Canada's linguistic diversity, it is also a UNESCO World Heritage site. This first Canadian city occupies a very dear place in the heart of many Canadians because it was the main port of entry for immigrants to Canada, from its establishment until WWI. In 2008, Canada will have a chance to celebrate the first permanent French colony in North America and the first encounters between First Nations and European explorers, which are at the root of the intercultural dialogue upon which modern Canada is built."

With this in mind, Tremblay sees a number of ways by which the Québec 2008 celebrations can resonate across the country.

"There are some existing relationships between Québec City and other Canadian regions. Québec is twinned with Calgary; the Mayor has attended the Stampede, and Calgary's Mayor has attended the "Carnaval" in Québec. We expect this special relationship to intensify as commemoration activities unfold.

"Keep in mind also that the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary is an important anniversary for Canada's Francophone and Acadian Communities and this will be an incentive to build partnerships with these communities. For instance, the Circuit Champlain, an Ontario-based tourism organization, wishes to organize a canoe journey on historic rivers to Québec City from different points associated with Québec's founder. Their objective is to arrive at Québec for the anniversary date on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008.

"A great gathering is in the works. There will be homecoming events held across the Québec region by root families, calling on their descendants to return and celebrate their shared heritage, and a number of major events will also take place during the year.



© Ontario Tourism

## CACVB and CTC meet on branding, e-marketing

*Members of the Canadian Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaux (CACVB) had an opportunity to get together with management and international staff of the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) in Vancouver early in June, and it was by all accounts a mutually satisfactory meeting of minds.*

continued on page 3

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## Tourism labour market hitting the wall?

### EDITORIAL

The experts have been telling us for a number of years that crunch time is coming for tourism businesses in Canada. Judging from a recent study from the west coast, crunch time has just arrived, and it's hurting. Move east to Alberta and it's not much better – especially around Calgary, where they talk of \$500 signing bonuses for restaurant and bar staff, and a floor of \$14/hr for entry-level recruits without a whit of training or experience.

On the west coast, highlights from the *Sea to Sky Labour Market Report* confirm that labour shortages – already being felt in the region – will get nothing but worse. The report found tourism operators need to attract an average of 3,500 workers every year from outside of the Sea-to-Sky region because the local labour market cannot fill this gap over the next 10 years.

Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador, too, has recently completed a labour market analysis, showing the labour shortage is being felt in all of Atlantic Canada. It's a good bet that some of their local labour pool has already headed west, as Alberta and BC ramp up their recruitment activities in all sectors, not just tourism. Randy Hunt, owner and operator of Crystal Waters Boat Charters and Tours in western Newfoundland,

was recently quoted in the (Cornerbrook) *Western Star* as saying tourism operators in his region are feeling the labour pinch: "Finding qualified people to work for us, that's the big thing right now... there's no young people left there any more. They're all gone." And it's not just pay rates – seasonality plays a big role; Hunt says that, as a seasonal operation, he often loses good employees over the winter as other, more permanent jobs become available.

To compound the new labour market reality, the industry faces another serious human resource issue in the small business sector, where ownership and management (and often the fundamental labour pool) are closely tied. The issue is succession – will the property or product simply close up shop when Mum and Dad finally call it quits, or will a buyer be found to take on what was founded as a labour of love?

We're in the thick of it, it seems. By now, we all understand the issues intuitively, even in the unlikely scenario that we haven't yet come face to face with the realities in our businesses. Times have changed, and the values that drive the new labour (and investment) market have changed right along with the times. Tourism is a people business, and people businesses require people; like it or not, the industry as a whole will have to bring every resource to bear on making tourism an employment opportunity of choice. It is no longer good enough to leave it solely to immigration policy lobbying and government-sponsored human resource programs. **7**

## Tourism

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### ON THE COVER:

Rue St-Jean at dusk takes on a medieval flavour during the Québec City Summer Festival, as masqueraded performers from Friche Théâtre Urbain move through crowds on stilts as if mounted on horses in Chamades. The Festival which takes place in July welcomes artists from around the world. Photo: Louise Leblanc.

## To the Editor

### Publisher's Note

Letters may be edited for length and content.  
For complete texts visit *TOURISM* Online at [www.canadatourism.com](http://www.canadatourism.com).

### Where, indeed!

*I am writing regarding your May 2006 editorial, where you say: "Only the Australians seem to be able to mount an international tourism marketing campaign based around a tagline like "We've poured you a beer, so where the bloody hell are you?"*

*I am not so sure the Australian tagline works as a whole to encourage travel to Australia. The first part – "We've poured you a beer" – works well for me, immediately offering up a feeling of friendly welcoming. The second part – "...so where the bloody hell are you?" – leaves me with doubts as to the effectiveness of the intended message.*

*I might have written the tagline as, perhaps: "We've poured you a beer, so come enjoy it Aussie style," or even "We've poured you a beer, so come enjoy it bloody hell Aussie style." The use of "bloody hell" may be seen from the creators' perspective as highlighting an expression in common use in Australia, and I agree the usage is fun, but in this case I feel it may actually instill doubt; after reading it one may well wonder at where the bloody hell are all the people? Why aren't they travelling to Australia? Something must be wrong...*

*Thanks for your perspective, though. It has given me food for thought!*

*May Georgina DeLory  
Toronto*

## TOURISM welcomes new associate editor

*TOURISM* publisher and managing editor is pleased to announce that Claude-Jean Harel has been appointed associate editor for *TOURISM* publications, beginning June 19. Harel, based out of Regina, SK has worked extensively with the CBC and Radio-Canada, and owns The Great Excursions Company, a tour operation focusing on cultural experiences in Canada. With this announcement, *TOURISM* says goodbye, with gratitude for his quality work and best wishes for the future, to Philip Kompass, who has taken a communications post with Atomic Energy of Canada Limited in Chalk River, Ontario.

Claude-Jean Harel can be reached at  
[harel.claude-jean@ctc-cct.ca](mailto:harel.claude-jean@ctc-cct.ca). **7**

### Write to us – it's so EASY!

At *TOURISM*, we strive to provide you with information about tourism industry issues you want – and need – to know about. Is there more? Is there something you want to read about? Is there something you would like us to investigate? Write to us – it's so EASY! E-mail: [tourism@ctc-cct.ca](mailto:tourism@ctc-cct.ca), or call 604-638-8342.

continued from page 1

The 49<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress will take place at Québec, and that likely will result in a Papal visit. The IIHF World Hockey Championship will be jointly hosted by Québec and Halifax that year, with the final game being played in Québec. The Sommet de la Francophonie will be hosted in the city during the fall. The 'gathering' theme imparts an inclusive character to the celebrations, with everybody commemorating – in their own way – their contribution to the past, current and future development of Canadian society through Québec 2008."

Québec 2008 will have a major economic impact. Tremblay says a number of major conventions and events are lining up, and points to the results of last year's Desjardins Marketing Stratégique study showing the celebrations are expected to generate \$120.5 million in tourism revenues alone. (The event is projected to add \$263 million to the Canadian GDP, of which \$213 million will be in the province of Quebec.)

But, in Tremblay's view, one of the richest legacies of Québec 2008 will be the way in which the St. Lawrence River will be handed back to the City's citizens and visitors. "In 1908, to commemorate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Québec City, the Federal Government handed over the Plains of Abraham as a legacy to the people. A century later – for the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary – and with the participation of the Québec City Port Authority and the Parks Canada Agency, four sites will become accessible to the public: Beauport Bay, a location already being used for aquatic activities; Brown Cove near the Plains of

Abraham, used for centuries for shipbuilding activities; *Pointe-à-Carcy* (a cruise ship terminal); and the *Bassin Louise*, now being redeveloped to make way for *Espace 400<sup>e</sup>*, the official site of Québec 2008 celebrations. For this legacy the Federal Government is investing \$70 million, and the province is providing \$70 million for the *Promenade Champlain* along the St-Lawrence River near the four legacy sites".

Tremblay cherishes his appointment to Québec 2008 as federal commissioner. "It is a very special retirement project for me," he says, "and it will be a special time for everyone in Canada, raising awareness about Québec around the world and encouraging people from all over to visit the city and discover other parts of Canada while they are here."

**Québec 2008: Setting the stage** *is the first in a series of articles TOURISM is developing on the subject of event planning and staging. Whether you are planning an international event like Québec 2008 and the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, or a regional event, there is a process that begins with the concept and continues through setting up the organizational infrastructure and involving partners, identifying the markets, getting volunteers in place, preparing the necessary built infrastructure, scheduling components, surviving the event itself, and assessing the results. Using Québec 2008 as a case study, TOURISM will follow the process through, talking to Québec 2008 and other event organizers at each stage. Hosting events is something that Canadians do very well, and increased tourism activity is a direct result; tourism businesses need to understand the process and how they can be involved at the ground floor.* 7

## CTC'S 2007 investments to include R&D

In 2007, while the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) will continue to invest in the same markets as 2006, some budget reallocation will be implemented to take advantage of growth markets. And, a long-term commitment to research and development (\$1.2 million in 2007) is seen as essential to maintaining market share.

The CTC board of directors has approved a continued focus on the US Leisure and MC&IT markets, Mexico, France, Germany, the UK, Japan, China, South Korea, Australia and Canada in 2007. In those markets where investment allocation will be reduced, it is not expected this will result in a significant loss of buying power, given the strength of the Canadian dollar relative to those markets' currency at current rates. Final budgets for all markets will be confirmed in September 2006.

In order to assist the CTC to allocate its marketing budget objectively, the Market Investment Model (MIM) was developed to compare market conditions identified as having an impact on Canadian tourism across each market. The model uses both economic and tourism-specific indicators, and provides a clear basis for market-to-market comparison. The model provides a balanced perspective of many of the key elements that can – and do – affect Canadian tourism revenues. Complementary to the Market Portfolio Analysis (MPA) rating system (which determines individual market potential) the MIM provides the CTC with an informed starting point from which to make objective investment allocations for its nine active international markets.

CTC investment in the US market (all) will decrease by 11.5% (a re-allocation actually expected to result in a net increase because of the increased buying power of the Canadian dollar if currencies hold at current rates). Similarly, although the Japan market will see an investment decrease of 10.7% in 2007, there is anticipated to be a net increase of almost 5% in buying power. Overall, the Asia Pacific markets will see a Canadian dollar investment increase of 8%, as will Europe and Mexico. The Canada (domestic) market investment remains the same in 2007.

For the first time next year, the CTC will include a line item in the budget for research and development. Says CTC market research manager Roger Laplante, "This is truly investing today for tomorrow's growth and prosperity for the Canadian tourism industry." Such a budget could cover a myriad of tasks, such as exploring new opportunities in emerging markets, testing new methods of marketing Canada, or undertaking additional market research. 7

## CTC integrates research units, functions

The research functions at the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) are being merged in a move that is targeted to enhance strategic market planning. As outlined in an announcement made June 21 by CTC president and CEO Michele McKenzie, the macro research and market research units will be merged immediately and led by Neil McInnis, executive director of research. Roger Laplante will remain manager of market research.

The newly integrated unit will be the responsibility of vice-president for marketing Greg Klassen. "The new combination of the corporate research program with product and market research will help fulfil a number of strategic needs," says Klassen. "The group will support the board of directors' strategic decisions by providing up-to-date information on the state of the global economy and markets." The move is also expected to help establish the importance of tourism in the Canadian economy through

ongoing tracking of the industry's performance, market trends, profiles, and shifts in Canada's key markets.

"I welcome this move to integrate research functions into one portfolio," says CTC research committee chair Stephen Pearce (vice-president, sales and market development, for leisure travel at Tourism Vancouver). "It is an appropriate decision in a competitive environment that requires robust, timely, and accurate information."

The new research group will continue to work in partnership with the private sector and public organizations in Canada and around the world to improve access to quality tourism information and data. "The group will develop and organize data in meaningful ways that increase their value to the industry and to governments," says Klassen. "The ultimate goal is to create a research-clearing house, where industry and governments can obtain information on the industry."

"Through this new initiative," concludes Pearce, "the CTC is reinforcing its commitment to strategic market planning and providing a sound basis for future decision making." 7

## Summer travel outlook remains strong

Canada's robust economy is keeping summer travel demand on track, according to the July 2006 issue of the *Tourism Intelligence Bulletin*, and the Canadian tourism industry appears poised for another year of profit growth. Business travel, in particular, has benefited from Canada's strong economy, which is good news for the Canadian lodging industry. Pricing trends remain on an upward track, allowing tourism businesses to make further revenue gains as travel demand continues to build.

Domestic travel intentions in particular have improved. Although the strengthening Canadian dollar is hurting the price competitiveness of Canadian vacation destinations to some degree, it has also softened the impact of soaring oil prices for Canadian consumers. Specifically, gasoline prices in Canada have not increased as much as they have in the US and travel prices in the US have been rising more dramatically than travel costs to or within Canada.

### Consumer (traveller) overview

The strong performance of Canada's economy continues to fuel travel confidence, according to the latest Travel Intentions Survey by the Canadian Tourism Research Institute. Of the Canadians polled in April and May, almost 60% said they planned to take a summer vacation between May and September 2006, up from 52% in April 2005. In addition, 42% of all Canadians polled said they would take their longest summer vacation in Canada this year, up from 37% in 2005.

In the US, climbing energy prices, combined with rising interest rates, are having a noticeable impact on American travel trends. The latest forecast by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) suggests that US leisure travel volumes will remain essentially flat this summer compared with last year, because of the impact of high gasoline prices on travel plans and general consumer confidence. Fortunately, US travel demand is expected to improve as the summer progresses and as

Americans become more accustomed to higher gas prices.

### Travel supplier overview

The Canadian airline industry continues to benefit from the strong Canadian economy. In their first-quarter financial reports, both Air Canada and WestJet reported significant improvements in net earnings, boosted by a solid rise in passenger fare yields. Despite the fact that pricing trends appear to be back on an upward track, air travel demand remains solid. Burgeoning jet fuel costs are still a concern, but favourable market conditions, overall, appear to be mitigating some of the negative effects of climbing fuel expenses.

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**While the outlook for domestic travel is quite favourable, Canadians have also been travelling abroad in record numbers – a trend showing no signs of abating.**

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Positive economic indicators continue to support an upbeat outlook for the Canadian hotel industry, as travel demand continues to build. The latest Canadian Lodging Outlook report by HVS International and Smith Travel Research revealed that between January and April 2006, room demand in Canada grew 4.2% compared with a year earlier. At the same time, room supply increased by only 1.3%, allowing the lodging industry to gain further pricing power and continue raising daily rates. Strong business travel trends have boosted the outlook in particular for upper-end lodging segments, which are expected to see the highest growth in revenues this year.

### Economic overview

Despite the surge in US economic activity in the first quarter of 2006, growth is expected to slow significantly as the year progresses. The economy is currently operating at its productive capacity and with an unemployment rate below 5%. A potential US slowdown may not have a major impact on Canada's

economy next year, but may hurt Mexican exports.

The current economic outlook for most of Europe is far more optimistic than it was during 2004-2005. Real GDP growth of 2.2% is expected this year, and growth at or above 2% is anticipated in 2007. While this growth is not stellar compared with other parts of the world, it is a welcome change from the 1 to 1.5% growth that has transpired since 2000. However, the European Central Bank, along with several other countries, has started to raise interest rates in an effort to slow inflationary pressures. If inflation accelerates, rates may increase further, jeopardizing the budding expansion.

Real GDP growth of 5% is anticipated in the Asia-Pacific region this year, but growth is expected to slow over the final half of the year. In 2007, economic growth in the region is expected to reach 4.5%.

### Looking ahead: can we keep Canadians at home?

While the outlook for domestic travel is quite favourable, Canadians have also been travelling abroad in record numbers – a trend showing no signs of abating. Key reasons include not just the strengthening Canadian dollar, but also the lure of exotic travel experiences as traveller confidence builds and as destinations such as China and Vietnam rapidly develop their own tourism industries.

In the years ahead, aging baby boomers will swell the ranks of those aged 55 and older. These empty nesters have the time and money to travel, and are most interested in the cultural activities and exotic experiences associated with foreign destinations. Considering the current outbound travel patterns of Canadian age groups, as well as the estimated growth in the number of Canadians aged 55 and over, even the most conservative estimates point to a substantial increase in outbound travel demand among Canadians.

Recent research has shown that a lack of awareness of what Canada

has to offer may not only be an issue for the US travel market; survey results suggest younger Canadian outbound travellers are also uncertain about where to travel in Canada. And it may be possible to attract more baby boomers to travel domestically by inviting them to experience the diverse and cosmopolitan activities available in Canada's world-class major cities. In the years ahead, it will be important to monitor these trends and perhaps entice more Canadians to explore their own country.

### Opportunities

A study by TripVision Ltd., a UK-based travel research firm, analyzed the planning and booking preferences of UK leisure travellers to determine the best way to sell travel products to specific segments of the UK market, according to a recent article on Travelmole.com. The study results split British vacationers into five groups, each of which approaches travel bookings differently. "Explorers" pursue new options in travel and technology, tend to choose independent trips and prefer to book online, using travel agencies only to browse brochures. "Spenders" go for the latest gadgets and high-end brands and use the internet to research travel, but prefer to book through travel agents to save time. In fact, they will spend more for better service. "Conformists" follow the pack when it comes to vacations, and use a broad range of booking methods. Finally, older travellers in their "golden years" like to travel but avoid technology, while "homebodies" like to take auto trips close to home—both of these groups rely heavily on travel agents for planning and booking their vacations. In general, UK online travel bookings are most likely to be made by consumers in higher socio-economic groups, who travel often and purchase independent trips.

*The Tourism Intelligence Bulletin is produced by the Conference Board of Canada on behalf of the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), and is available at [www.canadatourism.com](http://www.canadatourism.com). 7*

# Overseas numbers stronger, US weaker in 2005

Preliminary statistics show overseas travel to Canada increased in 2005, for the second time in two years. The number of overnight trips to Canada from countries other than the US increased 7.1% to more than 4.2 million; overseas tourists spent \$5.7 billion in Canada in 2005, up 6.5%.

The UK retained its status as the most important overseas market to Canada; the number of trips to Canada from that country reached 888,000, a 10.8% gain from 2004. Indeed, all top 12 overseas markets recorded increases in the number of trips to Canada, except for Hong Kong (-5.3%), and Taiwan (-7.7%). China registered the largest annual increase as 113,000 residents, an 18.8% increase, visited Canada in 2005.

## US visits, expenditures, continued to slide

Americans not only made fewer trips to Canada in 2005, but spent less as well. The number of overnight trips from the US fell 4.6% to only 14.4 million, and US tourists spent about \$7.5 billion here, down 8.6%.

Among the top 10 states of origin, eight recorded declines in overnight trips to Canada, the largest from Massachusetts (-12.9%) and Ohio (-11.8%). The only two increases were from Florida (+10.5%) and Minnesota (+2.9%). New York, Michigan and Washington remained the top three states for overnight visitors to Canada. All top 10 states recorded declines in spending in Canada.

Overnight travel from the US fell (automobile by 6.7% and air by 0.4%). Business trips by American residents to Canada declined 1.3% in 2005. Pleasure trips, which accounted for 57% of all overnight travel from the United States, fell 7.6%. The only trip purpose that recorded an increase was the number of overnight trips for visiting friends and relatives, which rose 1.3% to 2.8 million.

On the other hand, Canadians made nearly 21.1 million overnight trips abroad, both to overseas nations and the United States. These were the highest numbers on record since 1992 and the third highest ever for travel outside the country. Canadians spent nearly \$19.0 billion on their overnight travel outside the country, up 8.6%.

*This report is drawn from the International Travel Survey, which is now available by request. Contact Client Services at 1-800-307-3382 or email: [cult.tourstats@statcan.ca](mailto:cult.tourstats@statcan.ca). 7*

# 93% of Canadian travellers are "rubber tire"

According to the Second Quarter *Travel Survey of Residents of Canada* (TSRC) produced by Statistics Canada, Canadian residents made 50 million visits within the country during the second quarter (Q2) of 2005. About 42.2 million of them were to visit friends or relatives and for pleasure. Together, these two categories accounted for 84.4% of all visits in Canada. Of the remaining visits, 2.7 million were for business reasons and 5.1 million for other (personal) reasons. The majority of visits made by Canadians in Canada were same-day, accounting for 60.4% of the total. Overnight visits reached 19.8 million.

When Canadians travelled in Canada during Q2 of 2005, most of their visits, about 93%, were made by car or truck. Visits they made by bus or aircraft accounted for 4.5% of all domestic visits completed during this period. For overnight visits, residents of Canada spent 51 million nights away from home. Of these nights, 51.9% were spent in private homes, while 17.0% were spent in hotels and motels.

*These results represent some of the preliminary estimates of domestic travel for the Q2 of 2005. For general information on the TSRC or to obtain data, contact Client Services (613-951-9169 or e-mail: [cult.tourstats@statcan.ca](mailto:cult.tourstats@statcan.ca)). 7*

## A monthly guide to travel & tourism data

Tourism Activity	Reference Period	Quantity	% Change from previous year
<b>Tourists to Canada</b>			
From the U.S. – Total	January-April 2006	2,736,168	-6.0
By Auto	January-April 2006	1,637,844	-5.0
By Non-auto	January-April 2006	1,098,324	-7.5
From Overseas – Total	January-April 2006	906,805	3.5
United Kingdom	January-April 2006	184,336	-2.3
Japan	January-April 2006	89,543	-4.1
France	January-April 2006	76,262	3.8
Germany	January-April 2006	50,158	2.3
China	January-April 2006	28,817	19.8
Australia	January-April 2006	39,348	-7.0
Mexico	January-April 2006	46,933	20.3
Korea (South)	January-April 2006	44,334	3.3
<b>Outbound Canadian Tourists</b>			
To the U.S. – Total	January-April 2006	4,972,775	7.3
By Auto	January-April 2006	2,516,208	7.5
By Non-Auto	January-April 2006	2,456,567	7.1
To Overseas – Total	January-April 2006	2,848,094	6.3
<b>Employment in Tourism</b>			
Total Activities	First Quarter, 2006	606,000	1.5
Accommodation	First Quarter, 2006	154,300	1.8
Food and Beverage	First Quarter, 2006	143,200	0.7
Transportation	First Quarter, 2006	85,600	4.2
<b>Selected Economic Indicators</b>			
Personal Disposable Income per person (\$)	First Quarter, 2006	25,264	2.0
GDP at market prices (current, \$ billion)	First Quarter, 2006	1,417.3	0.2
GDP chained (1997, \$ billion)	First Quarter, 2006	1,181.2	0.9
CPI (1992=100)	May 2006	130.2	2.8
<b>Exchange Rates (in Cdn\$)</b>			
American dollar	May 2006	1.1095	-11.6
British pound	May 2006	2.0717	-11.1
Japanese yen	May 2006	0.0099	-16.1
EURO	May 2006	1.4159	-11.1

**Note:** All tourist estimates deal with trips of one or more nights; all data on this table is not seasonally adjusted except for the GDP at market prices and the GDP chained.

**Source:** Statistics Canada and the Bank of Canada

## International travel rebounds

Statistics for the month of April 2006, compared with the same month in 2005, show that total international overnight travel to Canada increased by 4.1%. A major influence for this rebound was the increase in US travel, which recorded its first gain since June 2005 (up 1.9%) with a total of 826,192 trips. Overnight auto travel rose 4.4%, representing a gain of almost 21,500 trips over April of last year, while non-auto travel registered a loss of 1.9%. Air travel was up 1.9% to 253,000 trips.

Overseas destinations also experienced stronger gains (up 11.3%) compared with April 2005, totalling 272,010 trips. In Europe, all three key markets increased: UK (up 17.2%); Germany (up 11.1%), and France (up 4.3%). Australia regained momentum following three consecutive monthly declines, with a gain of 1.1% in April 2006 as it continued to build on the strong growth it had recorded over the previous two years. Mexico recorded an exceptional gain this month compared to the same month last year (up 84.8%) with 19,165. Of the key Asia-Pacific markets, China experienced the highest increase (up 25.8%) with 8,799 visits, while South Korea registered its first loss in six months (down 1.4%) with 11,514 visits. 7

continued from page 1

Ken Fiske, Tourism Edmonton CEO and chair of the CACVB, told *TOURISM* that his organization meets twice each year for what he characterized as “information exchange dialogues” with the members working together to grow the Canadian tourism industry as a whole.

“Regardless of available budgets for tourism – in some cases \$300,000 and in others \$18 million – we find that our challenges are largely the same,” says Fiske. “Cities – especially but not only the larger ones – are gateways to tourism experiences in Canada, and how we influence (and are influenced by) tourism industry issues is important.”

Fiske is pleased with how the CTC is approaching the implementation of the new Canada Brand. “We had really good discussions on branding – and how we can integrate the brand – at the DMO level,” said Fiske in an interview following the meeting. “We had all been wanting to get the brand out there immediately for our marketing, and were a bit impatient. However, now that we have seen the presentations at our meeting, we realize the CTC is taking the right steps to implement it properly.”

“If we do it wrong, we could stumble and fall in a hurry,” he continues. “If we start rolling out brand out before we’re ready, we could wind up with imaging that is inconsistent with what we are trying to accomplish to position Canada in the markets; I am really happy with the progress that has been made, even though there is still more to be done before we’re fully ready.”

Effective e-marketing was considered a fundamental component of the CTC’s strategy. “I found the e-marketing presentation by Jens Thraenhart to be excellent,” said Fiske. “There is no question that e-marketing has to be done at all levels and – perhaps even more critically than with the brand – it is essential we integrate and coordinate our e-marketing work together with the CTC.”

Fiske expects to have another CACVB session with the CTC in the late summer or early fall to focus on just this issue. His concern is

that the CTC can do extremely effective work driving the consumer to the Canada website, but “sooner or later you want to drive that same consumer down to a provincial or DMO website; if our material and imaging are not compatible with what the CTC is doing, then we’re not going to succeed in closing that sale.”

Fiske is outspoken about the need for DMOs and the rest of the industry to bring their e-marketing “face” up to par: “If the folks at the CTC want to be on the leading edge of e-marketing in the world – and I sincerely believe they intend to do this and have the capability of doing so – and if (to use an automotive analogy) they create a Porsche and the consumer clicks through to a DMO website and runs into a Volkswagen beetle, we’re dead.”

Visitors bureaux are in direct contact on a daily basis with industry, and Fiske points out it is critically important that industry gets involved as well as the DMOs.

“We are in an excellent position to communicate to the industry what the CTC is doing, how we feel it can be effective, and drive that message to the industry in an efficient manner.”

Fiske expects this can be done in a number of ways, including workshops, e-mail messaging, and newsletters. “We will see some small operators who are very effective users of the ‘web who will jump on this immediately, as well as a lot of the ‘big guys’ like the West Edmonton Mall in my city for example, and national products and services like Fairmont Hotels and Resorts.”

When asked if there is a message that needs to be on the web immediately, Fiske was unequivocal: “We need to put out a strong message to our target audiences in the US market, communicating to them the facts about the current passport status. There is a big chunk of the US that really is not aware of the facts; there has been so much talk about requiring passports that the assumption in the US is probably something like ‘well, you need a passport now so there is no point going (to Canada)’. Instead, we need to send the message that the passport is still two years away, so come and visit us – you’re going to love it!” 7

## Cities look at US leisure market strategy

*The Canadian Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaux (CACVB) heard some encouraging news from the Canadian Tourism Commission’s (CTC) Siobhan Chrétien in early June. Chrétien, executive director for the US leisure market, told the Vancouver meeting of the CACVB that – despite a decline in volume of travel from the US – per-visitor yield is increasing, and this trend provides clear opportunities to build revenue from targeted US markets.*

Average daily spend from US leisure travellers is now \$503 (up from \$480 in 2004), and a key building block in the CTC’s strategy to rebuild the US market – focusing on high-yield tourists over volume and lower-yield customers – can be expected to produce positive revenue results for Canada.

Tourism Regina’s Steve McLellan, a former chair of CACVB, puts the recent decline in US leisure volume in a fresh perspective. While he acknowledges the difficulties being experienced by destinations and products that have relied in the past on same-day travellers from border states and cities, he thinks there could be a silver lining to the storm clouds the industry has been experiencing: “I would argue that we in the Canadian tourism industry should see this as a blessing,” he says. “We should acknowledge that – for far too long – we have been reliant on big tourism numbers from the day-traffic market, who indeed spent money but nowhere near what they should.”

McLellan emphasizes: “Nor did these visitors have the *experience* of Canada. We need our focus to be on customers in the second-tier states and further down, inviting them to actually come and see Canada – feel it, experience it.

“If we do this,” he concludes, “I would argue that our revenue will dramatically increase.” 7

## Overview of the CTC’s US leisure strategy

The CTC *US Leisure Strategy* recommendations are based on the results of the research conducted by DK Shifflet & Associates Ltd. with extensive consultation with the tourism industry. The largest barrier noted is that Canada is not on the radar screen in the US, competing destinations are viewed as more exotic and interesting, and Canada is not seen as offering any new, exciting or unique experiences.

Marketing and communications need to overcome these product awareness gaps by utilizing the new Canada brand. Research points out that competition for the US traveller is up dramatically, Canada lacks “brand identity”, and competitive travel costs (plus misperceptions of Canada) results in fewer US residents considering travel to Canada.

The US outbound market to Canada could be worth an estimated \$20.5 billion, from which Canada currently captures about 27% or \$5.5 billion USD.

### Next steps

The *US Travel Study* has yielded many insights into the current risks and the potential of the US market. The 2006 planning process was the foundation for the three-year 2007–2010 plan, focused on further market segmentation identifying the right customer for effective target marketing. Experiences appropriate to the market segments or niches will be communicated via the right marketing mix, with e-marketing at the core, in order to ensure Canada is a relevant and compelling destination.

Through the fall of 2006, the CTC will meet with industry and partners to communicate and plan. Collaboration is critical to ensure success in the US market. Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the CTC US marketing team should you wish to have participation at your own planning meetings this summer and fall. You can provide feedback and comments by writing to [chretien.siobhan@ctc-cct.ca](mailto:chretien.siobhan@ctc-cct.ca) or visit [www.canadatourism.com](http://www.canadatourism.com) for the US marketing program plans. 7

# Bringing life to the brand

## The Explorer Quotient

by Gisèle Danis

*I have read and heard a great deal about something called the EQ. Can you tell me, what exactly is this and how is it going to benefit the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), or people in the industry? (Sent from Brian Alexander in New Brunswick.)*

Thanks for asking, Brian and hopefully this should help to explain the "EQ" and its advantages. I know you're not the only one out there wondering about the Explorer Quotient (EQ), so your question is a timely one. We are currently "ironing out the wrinkles" but everyone will hear more in months to come, and we do hope to launch a roadshow to make sure everyone in the industry does have all the answers they'll need.

EQ both supports and communicates the brand while serving as a foundation for interacting with the consumer market. The EQ is a completely new way of looking at customer segmentation, and is a far more accurate and effective means of reaching customers – particularly in our industry – than through the old standards of age, income, and maybe location that we once had to rely on.

For example, those who view the world as a busy and chaotic place may be seeking familiarity and security when they travel, so they are presented with options that will provide this. For a spontaneous person it may be better to present destinations as "home bases" where they have any number of options, retaining that ability to be spontaneous that is such a critical part of their personalities.

Think of it this way: two travellers, of the same age and income, could be partaking of the same activity (for example, admiring the scenery of Lake Louise), yet both are having completely different travel experiences. One may be feeling a great sense of accomplishment having achieved a lifelong goal, while the other views the lake in a more spiritual sense, and feels connected to nature.

In the past, using traditional segmentation and media, we've only been able to present Lake Louise and other experiences in one context. Using the EQ and online capabilities, we can first determine what the consumers' real desires are, then present our products using words and images that match their emotional drivers.

Through new research built on the foundation of Environic's 3SC survey, we developed nine Explorer Types. Interestingly, when we analyzed all the factors that determine which type of explorer a person is, traditional demographics were not a determining factor. In other words, we discovered that a person's age, income, education or gender will tell you very little about the real benefit they are hoping to receive from a travel experience. Traditional demographics still play a role in selecting our best target markets, and we can match Explorer Types to demographics and even neighbourhoods using sophisticated databases.

Soon, the EQ will take the form of an interactive "experience engine", housed in a microsite off the CTC's main travel consumer website, [www.Canada.travel](http://www.Canada.travel) (you can see an initial non-interactive version at [www.keep-exploring.ca](http://www.keep-exploring.ca)). The goal of the EQ website is for consumers to determine their explorer type and then we present the potential traveller with experiences best matching their profile and social values.

Hopefully that has given you a better understanding of "what" the EQ is, so I'll move onto the second part of your question about the benefits and application.

I mentioned earlier about the advantages of the EQ as a means of segmenting your customers and potential customers. More than this, having the EQ gives us a marketing hook, and an invitation to the world to visit [Canada.travel](http://Canada.travel) and discover their own EQ. It serves as a very intriguing call-to-action, and fits well in the Tier 1 marketing activities of the CTC which

## Working together on brand implementation

*Steve McLellan, president and CEO of Tourism Regina and a former long-serving executive director of the Tourism Industry Association of Saskatchewan, is also a past-chair of the Canadian Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaux (CACVB). TOURISM asked him for his perspective on how CACVB members can engage with the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) and the implementation of the Canada Brand:*

**TOURISM:** *The CACVB had occasion to meet with CTC staff recently; what was your impression of the meeting?*

**McLellan:** It was a really useful and positive event for us. It was the first time we had a chance to sit down as a visitors bureaux association with CTC senior staff as well as the staff of the CTC's overseas offices. And meeting with the people responsible for implementing the Canada Brand and the internet strategy was especially positive.

**TOURISM:** *So you got a clear sense of where the CTC is going on this?*


**McLellan:** As an association, we really appreciate the approach that CTC leadership is taking, building a new team, new partnerships and practices, and being open to hear what the folks on the ground have to say. There is a fresh, young and thoughtful approach to moving forward that is quite evident from the discussions and presentations. This makes me very optimistic.

**TOURISM:** *What message would you have for your colleagues and industry members to get involved, then?*

**McLellan:** We as the industry need to step up to the plate and get really engaged with this new reality at the CTC, so we have our fingerprints on the new programs and services.

**TOURISM:** *Where do the opportunities lie for industry to actually get involved in the process?*


**McLellan:** Destination marketing organizations are the agencies that are in touch with industry at a working level (largely because more operators can afford to participate in DMO marketing programs). So one clear opportunity is the internet; it is an affordable marketing opportunity for even the smaller DMOs and their members, so the new emphasis on e-marketing is hugely important for us. And there is very sharp and approachable leadership at the CTC in this regard.

**TOURISM:** *Thank you for your comments!* 

are built on the Canada. Keep Exploring brand. The results generated by the EQ on the back-end (from participant's preferences) are particularly useful in terms of product development; we'll be able to determine what people want in a travel experience and ensure the products are there – and market-ready – to meet their needs.

From a development standpoint, it may be useful to examine our own products and activities and see what "explorer type" they may fall into. This serves to support the Canada Brand and adds a feeling of continuity, or cohesion, as a consumer moves through the various marketing tiers. It may also be useful for your operation or destination marketing organization to create its own "twist" on the explorer types, which can better relate to the regional initiatives.

Now the fun part is bringing the EQ tool to the industry, and working together so we can both benefit from each others' input. The CTC is currently developing a tiered partnership model which will allow for partner buy-in at a number of levels. Partners will be able to share in the information gleaned from the EQ profiles and database, and use to this market their own initiatives. The call-to-action can be put to work on partner websites and promotional creative as well. Best of all, the online EQ "Experience Engine" gives those small and medium-sized enterprises a chance to showcase a broader range of products which may not have fit well into the more traditional market segments (for example, some of the more "experiential" products).

*Gisèle Danis is executive director, brand integration, at the CTC.* 

# Canada down under: beating the competition

Canada has been gradually losing market share to more aggressive competitors in Asia Pacific. Shorter-haul Asia Pacific destinations are expected to remain popular in the short term as they offer strong packages with low airfares in order to rebuild their tourism industries. The Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) office in Sydney will be working throughout 2006 and beyond to counter this trend and ensure that travel to Canada continues to grow.

	2005	2006	2007
Person-trips	201,900 (estimate)	215,065	227,969
Receipts	\$278.9M (estimate)	\$321.5M	\$350.5M

- Increase the number of visitors by 6.5% and receipts by 10% to Canada
- Enhance the four-season awareness of Canada and trigger sales
- Ensure Canada's products and packages remain competitive and offer value for money
- Establish Canada as a leading "active nature" destination
- Expand range of product offerings to encourage regional dispersal

## Target Segments

According to the CTC's 2002 Australian consumer research, age appeared to be a factor for the potential market, with the middle-aged traveller over-represented. 76% of those aged 50-64 and 74% of those aged 35-49 indicated that they were interested in visiting Canada. Those aged 18-24 were typical in terms of likelihood of outbound travel in the next three years, indicating that Canada may have lower appeal for this group relative to competing destinations.

The following target markets represent Canada's best prospects and should be the focus of advertising and promotional efforts:

Primary	Aim
50+	Maintain and grow group travel market
29+	Grow high yield FIT Couple travel market
25+	Recapture Ski and Snowboard travel market share

Secondary	Aim
30+ family	Grow FIT family travel market
30+ family	Recapture Ski and Snowboard travel market share

## Strategies and tactics:

The CTC will endeavour to use *Canada. Keep Exploring* to position Canada as a unique, four-season destination that offers authentic and experiential products; consumers will be invited to "explore" what Canada has to offer. Brand Canada will be supported via live broadcasts and filming Canada for major breakfast television programs when possible. Media and PR activities will create heightened awareness of Brand Canada and – through existing non-traditional partnerships as well as new opportunities – place an increased focus on "lifestyle" products including shopping, food and wine, spa and wellness, arts and culture.

Generally speaking, awareness of shoulder-season and non-iconic product is low, so the CTC will work to develop initiatives to build traffic for the spring and fall seasons and encourage non-ski winter travel. Much of this will come in partnership with wholesalers and airlines, which will be encouraged to offer competitive initiatives for travel in shoulder and trough periods. The CTC will create specific educational training materials for inside sales, reservation staff and retail agents, similar in nature to the Canada Specialist program.

The Australia office will develop integrated, targeted e-marketing consumer campaigns to increase Brand Canada awareness on the web: the CTC's consumer website will be promoted through campaign links and inclusion in all collateral produced; a new "trade only" section of the CTC Australia website is under discussion, as are online brochures and training. Australia will seek to benefit from targeted customer relationship management campaigns, using new CTC technology.

The CTC will source market-ready products and target wholesalers or tour operators to carry new regional products. A critical challenge will be to ensure support is offered through an integrated approach to product promotion, via ongoing wholesaler and agent education (fams). The CTC will work with provincial and city partners to identify export-ready niche products that will be relevant to the Australian market.

Visit [TOURISM online](#) for more information on this market. **T**

# Tourism Australia extends a warm welcome

As the saying goes "Any publicity is good publicity," and judging from the results of Tourism Australia's latest marketing campaign, the cliché appears to ring true.

In late February 2006, the Hon. Fran Bailey, Australia's minister for Small Business and Tourism, unveiled what has now become known as the "Where the bloody hell are you?" campaign in markets around the world. Almost immediately the advertising was met with concern and criticism from consumers and media outlets alike; complaints ranged from the use of the words "bloody hell" to worries about age-appropriateness and a scene in which one actor is taking a swill of beer. However, not only was Tourism Australia prepared for the backlash, but frankly they welcomed it.

"More than 180 destinations advertised on UK television last year to

attract tourists and only one of them, Australia, is now getting this type of reaction. The campaign is creating a 'talkability' that marketers can usually only dream about," states Scott Morrison, managing director of Tourism Australia. The advertising also caused a stir in Canada, with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation expressing concern over the TV-spots. The CBC later opted to allow the ads, choosing instead to limit them to certain time slots.

In regards to the UK market specifically, the British Advertising Clearance Centre initially chose to ban the TV-spots. Morrison comments: "We had always factored in the prospect of such a decision in the UK. We decided to press ahead knowing that a ban would only increase interest in the campaign and give us the public relations equivalent of 'a free kick in front of an open goal'".

The destination marketing organization was careful to ensure that less "bloody" versions were prepared should they be required.

## "We never set out to be controversial, just authentic."

This campaign was developed specifically for international markets with the intention of showcasing the tourism assets of the entire country, especially those of rural and regional areas. Australia is well-known for its personality and character, and this campaign is meant to extend an invitation to motivate people to visit Australia now. In an increasingly competitive and tough commercial environment, Tourism Australia feels advertising must be "bold, aggressive and distinctive" to grab consumer attention. But, it must do this while remaining authentic and distinctively Australian.

"The tagline for the new campaign, 'So where the bloody hell are you?' has been thoroughly tested in all of our major markets, in particular Japan, UK, USA, Germany, China, New Zealand and South Korea, and was given the green light by our customers. They 'get it' – it cuts through and it delivers the invitation," says Morrison.

The campaign has now been viewed in nearly every country in the world and has generated record levels of worldwide online traffic. Despite only being launched in five countries (including Australia), the uncut advertisement has now been downloaded by people in 80% of the 191 nations across the globe and Tourism Australia reports consumer and trade support in their top seven markets has been "phenomenal." **T**

## R & D with a take-to-market focus

*Stan Cook is vice-president of operations and head guide of Stan Cook Sea Kayaking Adventures, and was recently appointed chair of the Product Innovation and Enhancement (PIE) committee for the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC). Active for over a decade in tourism industry organizations, Cook is a director of the Tourism Industry Association of Canada and serves on the management committee of the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership. He is currently chair of the Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism, Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador's sustainable tourism committee, and is immediate past-president of Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador.*

**TOURISM:** *Congratulations on your appointment as PIE committee chair! Looking over the document A New Strategic Role and Approach for the Canadian Tourism Commission, a phrase that jumps out at me is the emphasis on "take-to-market". This is a clear call to action for the partnership between the CTC and the industry at a product research and development level, and I expect part of your role as chair will be to ensure this doesn't just turn into another buzzword. Have you had a chance to think about how to move it forward in a meaningful way?*

**Cook:** I do see what you mean – it certainly is a buzzword of sorts. But, it really does make sense as a strategy, and fits within the overall strategy the CTC is moving forward with. Look at the main pillars of the strategy. If you are bringing something to market using this new strategy – product/market demand research, then product/market segment development, and new product introduction in CTC marketing programs – and if we do this properly and make sure new – or refreshed – products meet the demand, then this strategy will work well to develop our overall international tourism product.

**TOURISM:** *It has been said that successful corporations – presumably including consortia and partnerships such as we have in the tourism industry in Canada – spend aggressively on research and development (R&D). A recent decision by the CTC Board to clearly articulate and fund an R&D component in the budget, coupled with this new PIE strategy, opens the door to some pretty powerful approaches to building product sectors that match demand and have a hope of success in the marketplace. Could you outline the research processes – if not the specifics – that you expect to see happening in the next year or two?*

**Cook:** Doing the product/demand research will help us identify the experiences the market is looking for, make sure that marketplace demographics match the products we have available, and develop new and refreshed products to meet consumer demand. Yes, I agree, so many industries invest heavily in R&D, and I think PIE, with our new strategy, is going to be the CTC's research and development arm.

We'll be looking at all the variables that are out there, to understand what consumers want for travel experiences. We'll be using primary and secondary research to find out what products need to be developed or enhanced, then we'll undertake whatever research is necessary to make sure these products are unique and world-class, and can give Canada a really strong marketing edge.

**TOURISM:** *Clearly, it makes sense that new product development must support the Canada Brand. This must be true whether new products are filling gaps in Canadian product supply, or leading to new consumer experiences that enhance the Keep Exploring message. How do you propose to identify those gaps and innovations?*

**Cook:** There are a number of products that were put forward at our recent meeting, and while we knew we couldn't take on all of them, we picked a few product categories and some market segments we're going to go with



which will make a real difference in the next few years – and I need to stress that things don't happen overnight. We needed products to take forward over a few years if we are to be effective leveraging the *Keep Exploring* brand.

The spa, health and wellness sector is certainly a big one. Then there is outdoor adventure and ecotourism which Canada is really known for around the world – real icons for Canada. Cultural tourism has a big

potential internationally for Canada, as does aboriginal tourism.

Other sectors that surfaced in the discussions were sport tourism and winter tourism products, and they are indeed important – especially with the Winter Olympics coming up in 2010 – but we will be focusing over the next year or so on the sectors I mentioned earlier.

**TOURISM:** *Earlier I mentioned the "take-to-market" emphasis. I expect that articulating this will become very much the responsibility of a revitalized Tourism Innovation Partnership Program (TIPP). What is your vision for a successful TIPP initiative?*

**Cook:** This has taken up a lot of time and discussion at our meetings. Obviously, those agreements already in place will be respected, but as we move forward we all agree that if something is going to be done, it really has to be something that has the possibility to be at a national level, or at least multi-provincial in scope. Criteria will be focused on international market development and initiatives must fit with the strategy for implementing the *Keep Exploring* brand. These things will be fundamental to the program as we move it forward, but we don't want to lose the involvement of small and medium-sized tourism businesses, who have valued the program (formerly known as Product Clubs) as one place where they could get involved with the CTC.

**TOURISM:** *What would you like to see tourism businesses and attractions do to refresh or revitalize their products and experiences to keep them on par with the new brand and in the loop with market expectations?*

**Cook:** I think that being 'in the loop' is the key thing here. I suggest it's really important for tourism businesses to keep up-to-date, be involved with what's going on, and to know what the CTC and its programs – and the provincial tourism offices and DMOs – are trying to accomplish.

Some products are working well, and some may need minor modifications. But before you start fooling around, do your research. Understand who's coming to Canada, and who is coming to your region. Ask yourself how you can fit your product, or develop new products, to those markets and other new markets that are coming in.

We need to remember that many of our tourism experiences and products have been developed by people who understand and love the experiences they provide. Many products were initiated for love of the experience on the part of the operator, and making money was sort of a bonus. At the time, many people in the available market wanted that same experience, and the business had a chance to become successful, but times change, and the people who are buying these experiences change too.

For example, many of us grew up with a special relationship with national parks. However, New Canadians, for example, grew up without any experience of national parks, and in fact many of them see these parks as places where there are wild animals – dangerous places. So to get them to come to a national park needs some careful research to understand what it is that will change their perception, make the experiences desirable, and make parks attractive destinations.

Doing the research into how your product fits market expectations is essential.

**TOURISM:** *Thank you!* 7

# Partnerships at work in Nova Scotia

## Cape Breton's "Fabulous Foursome"



© Highlands Links/Clive Barber/2005

by Stacey Pineau  
Latitude Communications

There are striking similarities between Nova Scotia's Cape Breton region and Scotland – the very birthplace of golf: rugged shores, rocky hillsides and a stiff sea breeze. This is golf as it was meant to be played! To reach a competitive golfers' market, a group of golf courses have banded together under the name "Fabulous Foursome" to promote the golfing opportunities in Cape Breton. Comprised of Highlands Links, Bell Bay Golf Club, Le Portage Golf Club, and Dundee Resort and Golf Club, the Fabulous Foursome formed in 1996 when management at each of the courses realized they could achieve more by working together than through solo efforts.

"Each individual course's dollars can only go so far when it comes to promotional activities," says Ted Stonehouse, general manager at Bell Bay Golf Club. "But by working together, we're able to extend our reach. All four of our courses are tourism-driven facilities, and it simply made sense for us to pool our resources to reach the larger markets we can't reach on our own."

Each of the member courses makes a significant financial contribution to the "destination society" in order to support marketing and promotional activities. The organization has also received ongoing funding from Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation, a local economic development agency. "They've been a fantastic partner in this whole thing," says Stonehouse. "They've been supportive in every way they can and they work very, very well with us. We've appreciated everything they've done." The Foursome also works closely with the provincial government on tourism-related initiatives.

In support of media and public relations activities, the group has gone online through [www.golfcapebreton.com](http://www.golfcapebreton.com), and through an e-newsletter sent out to a growing list of golfers who have signed up to receive information about Cape Breton golf.

"As managers with our respective courses, the members of the Fabulous Foursome committee are so busy on the golf side of things that we work with a marketing company of record," says Stonehouse. "It allows the partners in the group to sit around the table, make decisions, and then let the marketing company run with it. One of the unique things making this team work is strong communication; that keeps things moving forward."

Four different course management structures are represented around the table when members of the Foursome meet, so there are diverse perspectives about how best to run – and promote – a golf course. Highlands Links is a federally-owned course operated by Parks Canada; Bell Bay Golf Club is owned by a group of private partners; Le Portage Golf Club is operated by a non-profit community society; and Dundee Golf Club is owned by a Cape Breton-based resort company.

Stonehouse feels part of the reason the group has continued to operate so effectively for the past decade is because members of the Fabulous

Foursome haven't forgotten that each member course has its individual objectives, so not all "great ideas" will work for the group. "We're sensitive to the fact we want to make sure it works for everybody," he says. "If a promotion doesn't work, we drop it. For example, we tried to generate some revenue using a player privilege card where golfers would buy a card and get a discount at all four courses, but it didn't work out."

One initiative that has proven effective is a joint training program whereby staff members from all four courses take part in educational sessions hosted by one of the partner courses. "We have a day every year where all of our staff goes to one of the other member courses, and the host course presents a training program," says Le Portage's Terry Burns.

These events not only have educational value, they also create ambassadors for the other courses in the area. "We've found through our research that travelling golfers are looking for value, for more than one experience or more than one golf course to play," explains Mark Sajatovich, marketing manager of Highlands Links. "In addition, from what our group has seen over the last couple of years, golf marketing has really taken hold in terms of selling different geographic regions, such as the southern US, different parts of Europe, Scotland.

The group continues to maintain existing key markets (Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada.), while looking to expand its reach in the European market, taking advantage of a new direct flight from Glasgow to Halifax. The Fabulous Foursome is also exploring possibilities in the southern US, where potential visitors view Cape Breton as a "cool" destination. New England is another target market with significant potential.

"In the case of Cape Breton Island, there are obvious ties – not only into New England, but to Europe," says Sajatovich. "Golfers are looking for quality golf product, but they're also looking for that après golf experience and the chance to learn about the culture of an area. They want to have a sense of place." **T**

### PERSPECTIVES

***In the golf world, gas prices and border hassles take a back seat to Mother Nature as the most worrisome element for a summer season. TOURISM asked golf course spokespersons across the country for their thoughts on what the summer of '06 might hold:***

*Our indications are for a good summer. We had a strong May, thanks in large part to the weather, and we expect to continue this trend. Our advance bookings are up as well. Most of our marketing outside of the local area is done through a pay-per-click system (on the internet). We found that this really has generated the best return for the money spent.*

**Barrie McWha, Pheasant Glen Golf Resort, BC**

*I expect this coming summer will be great. Forecasters are calling for a hot and dry summer which is good for getting golfers out on the course. We do have advertising in a number of golf magazines, and run ads locally as well in the newspapers and radio when we can. We're about 10 minutes past the Perimeter Highway around Winnipeg, so that is where the majority of our guests come from.*

**Brad Wlasiuk, Bridges Golf Course, Manitoba**

*I'm optimistic for the summer. Most of our visitors come from the Ottawa or Gatineau area, and we have a solid number of local members and players in the immediate area as well. Thankfully, because of the local players, if we have a stretch of bad weather, or bad days, we don't lose as much of the non-recoverable business that some of the more tourism oriented courses might.*

**Linda Thompson, Pine Lodge Golf Club, Quebec**

# Get your products on the shelf!

There are more revenue opportunities in tourism sector than admission fees and hotel room rates. Retail is big and getting bigger, especially as destination marketers increasingly target high-yield tourists. For example, O'Brien's Whale and Bird Tours Inc. at Bay Bulls, NL does more than offer boat tours for tourists.

According to Ann O'Brien, they are active in the gift shop business too. In fact, during the 2005 season they expanded their retail sales operations to an outlet in the city of St. John's. While she acknowledges that their dockside gift shop is labour-intensive (contributing meaningfully, nonetheless, to the operation's gross revenue), she is very pleased with the new storefront the company established downtown in the city. "It has a higher revenue potential because it is open for a seven month season including Christmas," O'Brien points out, "and it is also very useful to market our boat tours to people who are already visiting the city."

Across the country, the Capilano Group of Companies (CGC), based from its Capilano Suspension Bridge property at Vancouver, is into tourism merchandizing in a big way. CGC operates four retail stores; two (Great Northern Trading at Banff and James Bay Trading at Victoria) are free-standing retail stores, and the others (Moraine Lake Trading at Moraine Lake Lodge at Lake Louise and Capilano Trading at the Suspension Bridge) are directly associated with company-owned tourism service and attraction businesses.

"We sell everything from 99-cent souvenirs up to First Nations art which can run over \$1000," says Sarah Siska, director of retail operations for the Capilano Group. "We also sell high-end jewellery, clothing, footwear, and native crafts that cater to people who perhaps can't afford the art pieces.

We even have beautiful candy and fudge counters, serving fudge made at the Capilano property."

The company has a "made in Canada" policy, with a goal of 80% of the products locally or Canadian produced. "There are some cases (low end souvenirs for example) where Canadian products simply can't compete in price with stuff made in China, for example," Siska continues, "but we try very hard to have local products whenever they are available."

She points out the stores' principal customers are tourists; the company counts on about 200 days of tourism season to make it all happen (May to October). Like her colleagues across the country in Bay Bulls, she has an e-marketing component in development, to capitalize on "repeat visits" online from visitors who may want to order special items for gifts at Christmas, for example.

Siska offers this advice to tourism businesses: "If you are not doing retailing, you should be. People are on holiday, they are hungry, and they are looking for something to take home with them to remind them (and their friends) of where they have been."

Perhaps the challenges for small operators of getting started in retail, including troubles accessing a variety of good product, is what took Tourism Saskatchewan into retailing Saskatchewan-made products many years ago. That decision is currently being reviewed by the destination marketing organization's (DMO) management team; certainly there are those in private business who would question if retailing is an appropriate line for a DMO to be involved with.

Gift shops are big business indeed, even when they are on a small scale. Regardless of the size of the revenue stream, they are a rather intimate extension of the tourism business itself and offer a unique component of the visitor experience. The customers have already made it through the front door, and they are ready to buy! **7**

## Heritage attraction pays its own way

While the 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century epoch of the fur trade and voyageurs in western Canada is steeped in adventure, discovery and a hint of romanticism, few communities have been as successful as Franco-Manitobans at using this colourful epoch to create tourist experiences.

In the heart of Winnipeg, in the French quarter of Saint-Boniface, stands a wooden fort just like the ones you see in western movies and at various North American historic sites. The structure at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine rivers is actually an exact replica of a North West Company fort that was erected on the opposite shore in 1809. The replica was built in 1979 by Festival du Voyageur Inc.

"Historically, the fort was comprised of the palisades with a few cabins in the enclosure," says Josée Vaillancourt, director of marketing and communications with the Festival du Voyageur. For two weeks every February, the fort comes alive as thousands of visitors flock there during the Festival du Voyageur, western Canada's largest heritage-themed winter festival.

"In 2001, the Festival constructed the Governor's House, a spacious building used as a reception and

conference centre. Revenue generated by it since then has enabled us not only to finance Fort Gibraltar but also, this past May 24, to open the fort as a tourist site with a 2006 summer program."

Where Magazine recently named Fort Gibraltar as one of ten must-see Canadian attractions for this summer, so Festival du Voyageur officials hope the summer opening of the interpretation centre will generate new visits to the fort and the emerging tourist destination of Saint-Boniface. Indeed, the fort's success reflects the vitality of an entire community.

"At Fort Gibraltar, we have four resident interpreters and a staffer who oversees heritage programs," Vaillancourt explains. "You see them working in the smithy, sewing in the workers' quarters, and arranging the displays in the store, which doubles as a trading post. We also have a Métis woman who cooks over a fire. People who come to Fort Gibraltar can see how bannock, the Métis bread, was made. Everything is cooked over an open fire. The comments we get confirm that visitors take away good memories."

The interpreters encourage visitors to try some of the games the

voyageurs used to play, like axe-throwing or leg wrestling. It's as though these bygone traditions were waiting for an appropriate setting to find expression and make their mark on the entire Winnipeg tourism industry.

"People here are very aware that our ancestors built the community, and it's thanks to them we have a francophone community in Manitoba. There exists among Franco-Manitobans a desire to honour these people, and that's why the public wants to invest in its history for the future. The community is very supportive of Fort Gibraltar, and if it wasn't for its participation, the fort would never have seen the light of day."

Today, when the City of Winnipeg wants to attract a convention or major event, Fort Gibraltar is

often cited as a don't-miss attraction. Vaillancourt admits she relies a great deal on industry partnerships to ensure the fort's long-term prosperity.

"By working with Travel Manitoba and Destination Winnipeg, we are able to target more distant markets, because the reality is we are a non-profit community organization. Our promotional budget is small; as a result, we depend greatly on their support to target niches like northwest Ontario, North Dakota, Minnesota and Saskatchewan."

The dream of Vaillancourt and her colleagues is that one day Fort Gibraltar will become an interpretive centre that's open year-round, evidence of a cultural vitality that has been relegated to the shadows of the past for far too long. It appears this dream is well within reach. **7**



# Staffing solutions as varied as, well, staff!

Joe Komaric, vice-president of operations at Days Inn Calgary South and Days Inn Vancouver Airport, found a solution to his housekeeping staff shortages: he laid off the staff he had, and contracted housekeeping functions to a professional cleaning company. According to an article in the June 2006 issue of *Hotelier*, the strategy worked: standards are being upheld, and in fact the cost per room decreased slightly.

While this maneuver got the job done, it didn't result in an overall increase in the number of employees available to his company (he still has shortages in other operational areas). Nor, of course, did it result in the miraculous birth and coming of age of a new generation of eager hospitality workers!

An oft-positied potential solution is hiring people who have taken early retirement and who may want – or need – something to do and a few extra dollars. On the positive side, they bring life experience and at least a broad knowledge, but as one operator who tried the strategy for a couple of seasons commented, “trouble is, they have grandkids – and they are married to the grandmothers. The good ones often have so many social and family commitments that they cause more scheduling problems than the highschool crowd. Instead of ‘weekends are for partying’ it’s ‘weekends are for the grandkids!’”

Industry associations – particularly the Hotels Association of Canada and similar organizations in BC and Alberta, are trying to

convince the federal government to make it easier to bring in temporary workers from other countries. Immigration is a touchy subject at a political level, and there are parts of Canada – and demographics in Canada such as First Nations – where chronic unemployment is a big issue despite the “hot spots” for job growth like the two western-most provinces.

There is indeed a broad range of solutions to staff shortages, with most of the current thinking focused around recruiting, training, and retaining. It's a good thing there are potential – and even innovative – solutions out there, because the problem is a big one, and it's growing worse. **7**

## Pure Canada earns top international awards

If you haven't come across this publication before, you shouldn't be surprised. *Pure Canada* is a Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) lifestyle magazine about travel and adventure that aims to convert sophisticated and savvy US consumers into visitors to Canada. The publication has achieved its goals and objectives so well that it won the top prize in its class, from among almost 5,000 international entries, at this year's APEX Awards. The CTC's Yolaine Dupont is the lead on the project: “*Pure Canada* goes after the ‘comfort creature’ with a fascination for culture and shopping and all those good things that bring revenue to a country when those travellers come to visit us,” she said.

*Pure Canada* is the winner of a Grand Award in the Magazines & Journals category at the APEX. The award recognizes excellence in graphic design, editorial content and achieving overall communications effectiveness and excellence. Here is what the judges had to say about *Pure Canada*: “A simply gorgeous magazine – superlatives in every area: photography, illustration, type, and layout. Interesting top-flight copy keeps the reader reading and completes the package.”

If that wasn't enough, *TOURISM* just learned *Pure Canada* also earned 5 Magnum Opus Awards. The Publications Management Magnum Opus Awards honour publications that deliver – strategically, editorially and visually – with a consistent quality of the highest order. Created in conjunction with the Missouri School of Journalism, the Magnum Opus recognizes the achievements of those who work painstakingly every day to produce corporate publications that get results for their organization.

*Pure Canada* magazine is an annual publication of the CTC in partnership with Spafax, the publisher of *En Route* magazine. Its primary aim is to promote one of the world's greatest brands, Canada, by capturing the country's cachet of cool.

“This is our fifth edition of *Pure Canada*, and our third with Spafax. They have elevated the piece from year to year. It used to be sent to people who requested information about Canada; we changed our strategy last year and we are now doing strategic distribution at targeted events and locations in the US. For example, this year, we have a luxury hotel chain as a partner; we are actually talking specifically to their best customers and asking them to consider Canada for a vacation. We are seeing results on that already.”

Dupont's US Leisure team also targets venues like Bryant Park in New York City, as well as associations like the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) which meets in Toronto next year. “We are going to be mailing *Pure Canada* to the PCMA database. Because these people are coming to Toronto, we are hoping that by sending *Pure Canada* four or five months ahead of their trip, they are going to consider coming to Canada before the convention, or will look at doing a pre- or post-convention trip.”

A 2005 *Pure Canada* readership study of respondents who recalled receiving the magazine two to ten months after delivery found the publication has an extremely high readership level, with over nine in ten respondents reading some or all of the magazine. In fact, as a result of reading *Pure Canada*, four in ten respondents (41%) mentioned that they began researching for a trip to Canada. **7**

## People

**Paul Nursey:** marketing specialist, U.S. Leisure at the CTC; **Daniel Vasquez:** online marketing officer, CTC e-marketing team... **Kevin Prendergast:** executive chef, Hilton Toronto... **Susan Tilley-Russell** (CorporaTel): chair, Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia... **Nick Beaumont:** executive chef, The Fairmont Winnipeg... **David Garcelon:**

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